

## LEGENDS 301

### Chapter 301: First Leg Against Olympiacos III

Pepe was the one who managed to get to the ball first and he boldly put his head into the path of the ball, directing it goalwards.

{Puts his head to it!}

{GOAL! Pepe!}

{The captain has led from the front and struck the opponents down even further!}

{The way back for Olympiacos is gradually closing and it's beginning to look like a game set-in match} the commentator shouted like he had joined the Porto fans in their homes in screaming jubilantly as they swept away their opponents with the third goal of the game.

The Olympiacos players could not help but look defeated as they watched the Porto players celebrate.

They had been playing with hopes that they could somehow still find something in the game, but Porto had gone ahead to dash their hopes with no hesitation in their steps.

#85th minute...

The game was nearing its end and it was all but confirmed that Porto would be winning the game, yet they weren't slowing down and kept pushing seemingly looking for another goal much to the chagrin of the Olympiacos players.

Soon an opportunity opened up for the Porto team once again as Jason received a pass on the edge of the throwing line on the left flank.

Jason fed the ball past his marker and immediately chased after the ball.

His high acceleration allowed him to burst past the tired Olympiacos defender, allowing him to catch up to the ball before it rolled out of play.

On catching the ball, Jason flicked it forward and ran with the ball down the flanks, but he had miscalculated slightly and kicked the ball farther than he intended to.

However, he didn't give up on the ball and chased after it and he was soon about to catch up, but by then the ball was almost rolling out of play.

With an Olympiacos defender chasing after him from behind, Jason had run out of time and could no longer cut into the penalty box as he intended, so he did the next best thing which was to hit the ball into the penalty box and hope his teammates could do something with the cross.

{Hopeful cross from Jason}

{Can it find a teammaaate? Oliveira with the header!}

{Goal!!}

{Porto hit four!}

{They say the third time's the charm, but Porto aren't satisfied with just three!} The commentator's voice was like a death knell to the Olympiacos players and fans who were already feeling hurt watching the Porto players celebrate their fourth goal against them.

{The goal scorer goes over to thank the winger who made this goal possible with a splendid cross from the left. All the striker was to get his head to it}

{I've been counting and that makes it three assists from this player. He hasn't been able to make it to the scoreboard, but he has been the illusory nail stuck in his opponent's sides} The commentator continued speaking even as the Porto players headed back to their half of the field.

His words reminded the viewers of Jason's contribution to the game which had come in the form of the important but less eye-catching assists.

Jason listened to the commentary as he tucked away a few strands of hair that had come loose and were blurring his view as he walked back to his position.

It was overall a good day at the office for him with three assists to his name, but Jason still wished to score at least one goal as well and he played with that in mind as the match resumed.

Unfortunately for Jason who was hoping to score a goal, the chance didn't open up as the Olympiacos team locked up after conceding their fourth goal of the game.

It didn't help that his teammates also sat back and allowed time to run out since they were already leading with four goals.

In the end, the referee's whistle blew shrilly after the added time had run out and the match came to an end.

\*Fweeeeee\*

{It's the final whistle and Porto have won it}

{After an enthralling game that had no lack of excitement and goal, Porto come out on top and rise to the second position in their group after their second game}

{With their showing out there today, their fans will have little doubts about their chances of making it into the knockout stages of the Champions League}

{However, one does not qualify after the second game. We'll see what the table looks like in the coming weeks and who knows if we might be in for a surprise}

{Olympiacos remain at the bottom of the table and they'll have a lot to do if they are hoping to gain any points from their opponents in the coming week, Manchester City who are currently occupying the top spot in the group}

{That's all from us, Good night to you all} the commentator said his last words of commentary before turning off the microphone.

On the field, Jason had been invited over to the sidelines for another interview on the 'Champions League Today' show.

Jason was quickly fitted with the microphone and in no time was connected to the studio.

{... We bring to you live, the man of the match from the Porto vs Olympiacos game tonight, Jason Bolu} Kate Abdo said as Jason's face appeared on the screen.

"Good evening," Jason said politely into the microphone.

{Good evening to you too, fantastic showing out there tonight} Kate Abdo replied.

{Yeah, you guys had your first win of the Champions League tonight and it's your first ever win in the Champions League, how do you feel?} Micah Richards asked with a big smile.

"... Uhm, It's always good to win, and uh, I'm happy to cross another milestone in my career," Jason said holding up the Man of the Match trophy.

"I wish I had scored a goal though, but there'll be time for that I guess," he continued with an honest smile.

{Oh, you're a greedy one, aren't you?} Jamie Carragher asked with a little surprise.

{Yes, a hat-trick in assists is good enough, don't you think?} Roberto Martinez also asked.

"I'm always happy to help the team and it's clear from my three assists that I was helpful, but it's not my name that's up there on the scoreboard and I don't quite like that," Jason was very direct, not bothering to hide his ambition under gilded words.

{Ambitious, aren't you?} Micah Richards with an impressed smile.

{Men... so insatiable} Kate Abdo commented with a meaningful smile, her words not seeming to be related to the current conversation.

{Three assists weren't enough for you? You sound like Cristiano after scoring a hat-trick, he would still want more!} Jamie Carragher spoke from experience.

"Is that who I sound like?" Jason asked with a raised eyebrow.

"I mean, Cristiano is my idol so his attitude might have rubbed off on me,"

"You know, that I sound like him is probably the best compliment I've received in all my life," Jason said with a wry smile as he rubbed his hair a bit.

{Oh is that a new hairstyle?} Micah Richards interrupted before Jamie Carragher could reply to Jason.

{It fits you a lot too} Kate Abdo said as she seemingly scrutinized Jason's image.

{Yeah, really brings out your eyes which speaking of which, I've been meaning to ask... Are those contact lenses?} Micah Richards asked Jason, curiosity ebbing from his tone.

{No, these are my eyes, my mum had blue eyes} Jason replied, a bit confused as to how the conversation quickly changed from him talking about Cristiano being his idol to talking about his eyes.

What he did not know was that apart from the curiosity of Micah Richards about his eyes, three of the four hosts of the show had a collective agreement to not allow any talk about Cristiano Ronaldo or Lionel Messi to crop up in the show without previous warning.

A debate about those two football giants could throw off the show and wasn't likely to end quickly as everyone had different opinions, so Micah had quickly interrupted before Jamie Carragher replied and started a debate between him and Jason.

{I don't think that's how that works though} Kate Abdo said, confused.

"Well, my mum's white, she had blue eyes, my dad was black but had a medical condition called heterochromia and one of his eyes was blue, and then they gave birth to me who had a medical condition that gave me my mum's blue eyes even though it doesn't usually work that way,"

"My sister didn't have my blue eyes,"

"Does that clear things up," Jason asked after explaining everything in one breath, wondering what this had to do with a sport's TV show.

{...Now there's a brief and concise explanation if I've ever heard one} Kate Abdo said after a pause.

She had noted Jason's use of past tense when talking about his family and she had immediately decided not to ask any further questions concerning the matter.

She was a reporter, but it was unethical to bring up sensitive situations like this one on a show like the one she was hosting.

The others in the studio were as professionally sensitive as her and they jointly shifted the conversation back to football after that.

Chapter 302: 2020/21 Liga NOS Matchday 6

\*\*30th October 2020\*\*

\*7:49 pm\*

Today was Porto's sixth match day of the Liga NOS campaign for the 2020/21 season, but Jason was just hopping off his treadmill after a five-minute high-intensity run.

Jason bent to his and placed his hands on his knees to catch his breath, the run having exhausted him quite a bit.

His muscles were screaming, especially since he had spent most of the whole day doing physical training.

As for why he had spent most of the day doing intensive physical training and was in his gym room at his house when the match was starting in just about half an hour... well, it was because he wasn't a part of the squad.

The head manager had not just chosen to take him out of the starting line-up for that game, the manager had removed him from the lineup going to Pacos de Ferreira that day.

Since Jason's return to the team, he had appeared in three matches, two of which he had played the full ninety minutes, but despite his contributions, or more appropriately, because of those contributions, the manager had to be extra careful to not allow him to get injured because of exhaustion and muscle fatigue.

Thus Sergio Conceicao had not added Jason to the provisional line-up for the match against Pacos Ferreira but had told Jason that he would definitely be part of the squad for the match against Marseille in four days.

Hence, Jason's current situation.

He wasn't happy either, but he was not yet at the level where he could voice his disagreements to the manager, and even if he was at that level, he still wouldn't do it.

The manager was the one who held the reins at the club and everything he did was for the betterment of the team.

The last thing Jason needed was to be seen as someone who placed himself over the team because he was seemingly more talented than average and was performing well.

Thus he had accepted the manager's suggestion which wasn't really a loss to him anyway, after all, he had gotten a promise of involvement in a Champions League game.

Jason had headed home after the team had left for Pacos de Ferreira and come home to train at his personal gym and he had been going at it, pumping iron till now.

With the match starting soon, Jason put a stop to his training for the time being as he wanted to watch his teammates play.

He first headed to his bathroom for a quick wash up and then he headed to his kitchen to prepare some food for watching his match.

As a half-American, Jason couldn't watch a screen and not be munching on something at the start.

Whether it was a show, a movie, an animation, or a match, he had to be munching on something at the start of whatever he was watching.

It was the American thing to do, and he wasn't denying that half of his heritage... also he was pretty hungry and had not yet eaten dinner.

Luckily he managed to finish up before the match started and got to the front of his television when the players started matching out of the tunnel.

Jason sat and made himself comfortable on the couch as the commentator started calling out the line-up of the Porto team.

{Here's the Porto side and not only has there been major changes to the team we saw last time out, but their shape seems different as well}

{Porto seem to be adopting a 3-4-1-2 formation for this match}

{They will still be using two upfront like before, but there will be an addition of an attacking midfielder who will be helping the two strikers up front}

{For the four midfielders, the two in the center will probably have similar jobs, but the two wide midfielders will not only have to help the team by attacking down the flanks, but they also have to protect their flanks as well as they have no one behind them to guard the flanks}

{We'll also be seeing three center backs on the Porto side as opposed to the two that they usually use}

{With all that said, here is the line-up for the Porto team}

{Augustin Marchesin will be the man in between the sticks, standing gallantly as Porto's last line of defense}

{The three center backs guarding the backline will be the team captain, Pepe, the Congolese man, Chancel Mbemba, and the French loanee from Chelsea, Malang Sarr. It will be his first professional game for Porto and the fans will hope he hits the ground running}

{In center midfield, we have Romario Baro and Marko Grujic. Both of them are not major names in the Porto first-team squad and it's Grujic's first game for Porto after a successful loan deal bringing him over here from Liverpool for the season}

{In the wide midfield positions, we have Jesus Corona on the right, and a loanee from West Ham, Felipe Anderson, on the right}

{Up front, we have Mylo Baumgartner playing as a center attacking midfielder which is a completely different role from what we've seen from him so far}

{In the striking positions, we have a strike partnership between Moussa Marega and Mehdi Taremi}

{Looking at this line-up, I can't help but think that the Porto manager is trying too risky of an experiment with starting the three loan players despite their quality}

{It seems like he's resting quite a few players for the match against Marseille on Wednesday, but such a drastic change in the squad would affect the team chemistry a fair bit and this could provide an opportunity for their opponents in this game}

{Will Pacos de Ferreira be capable enough to cause such an upset against the defending champions of the Liga Nos though?}

{We will see at the end of the ninety minutes, for now, we have an exciting game ahead of us} The commentator gave his commentary as the players arranged themselves across the pitch while the captains were with the referee who was doing the coin toss.

Jason who was snuggled comfortably into his couch could not help but perk up after seeing the team's formation and line-up.

He recognized the line-up because it was something they had been working on in training lately due to the lack of first-team level wingbacks in the team.

The wingback department of the Porto team was currently the weakest part of the team, especially after Alex Telles' departure earlier in the season.

Wilson Manafa was currently the only experienced wingback on the team as Zaidu Sanusi had just arrived.

The remaining wingbacks were just academy graduates that Sergio Conceicao had brought to the team out of necessity.

He didn't have much of a choice back at the beginning of the season.

Currently, Zaidu Sanusi is the team's only left-back, and Wilson Manafa is the only first team-level right-back.

The manager had made Mattheus Uribe play in the right-back position a few times, but it was not his favored position and many complications had happened in matches because of that.

There was also the potential problem of injury which could throw the whole team off if either of those two guys got an injury.

Hence, Sergio Conceicao had proffered the solution of training another formation so that they could deal with any unexpected situations and the formation the manager had chosen was the one that the team was about to use against Pacos de Ferreira.

However, Jason didn't expect the manager to choose to use this formation yet as they had barely started training in that formation a few days ago and they had merely trained it in passing.

They hadn't really gotten down to it as they had other training sessions to focus on as a professional team, so it was a surprise to Jason that the head manager was already having the team use this formation in a match.

"Well, it's not my business, I just hope no problems crop up," Jason muttered as he put a glass of orange juice to his mouth.

At the Estadio da Mata Real, the pre-match formalities were already over and the Pacos de Ferreira team was about to kick off the game.

The Pacos de Ferreira striker, the Israeli, Dor Jan, stood over the ball and awaited the referee's whistle that signaled the start of the game.

\*Fweeeeeeee\*

{The referee's whistle has been blown. Kick-off!} the commentator spoke as Jan passed the ball to a teammate immediately after hearing the whistle.

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It had been ten minutes since the match kicked off and the match could not be said to be meeting expectations as there had hardly been a shot from the two sides.

The Porto team's gameplay was currently lacking a lot of its sharpness and ease when in possession of the ball which was to be expected considering the major changes in the line-up.

This led to the Pacos de Ferreira team having the chance to have more possession of the ball than they should have, but despite having more possession than usual, it wasn't easy to break through the Porto defense.

Pepe led the other two center-backs to do their jobs in keeping out the Pacos de Ferreira players, and so far they had been successful, but the Pacos de Ferreira was a professional team that was able to survive in the top-flight Portuguese league so they weren't harmless to the Porto team especially now that they had been given a boost in the forms of Porto's shaky midfield and lack of defensive cover on the flanks.

The ball soon found its way to Dor Jan who immediately chipped the ball over to the right flank where his teammate was making a run and had easily evaded Felipe Anderson.

As the Pacos de Ferreira right winger made a run inside Porto's half of the field, Malang Sarr immediately ran out to block his path before he could get any closer.

Chapter 303: 2020/21 Liga NOS Matchday 6 II

As Malang Sarr ran towards the Pacos de Ferreira right winger, the winger fed the ball further down the right flank, drawing Malang Sarr along and reducing the defense in the center, but Malang Sarr didn't think that far when he followed after him.

Even if he realized the risk of what he was doing, he couldn't leave him to run around freely so his actions were inevitable, but unfortunately, he wasn't able to catch up to the Pacos de Ferreira who was proving to be quite tricky with the ball.

Soon, the Pacos de Ferreira right winger was on the right side of Porto's penalty box and he immediately sent a grounded cross into the penalty box where Dor Jan was arriving.

The Porto defenders had been following Dor Jan into the penalty box, waiting for the return pass as the right winger couldn't take a shot from that far down the flanks, but as they ran, Dor Jan suddenly came to a stop and it was at this moment that the cross came rolling in.

The Porto defenders weren't able to stop on time and almost flew out of view, but Pepe immediately stretched a leg backward to try and block the cross.

Pepe's reaction was quick enough and he managed to get a leg to the ball, but his touch on the ball was too weak and Dor Jan still managed to catch the ball before it flew past him.

{He's all alone!}

He immediately brought the ball down into shooting position and sent the ball flying past all the Porto players and into the back of the net.

{He shoots! He scores! Pacos de Ferreira are making full use of their home advantage and are the ones who open up the game!}

{They lead!}

Dor Jan was already running down the right wing in celebration and he jumped on the right winger who had sent the ball his way while the rest of the Pacos de Ferreira team came to join in the celebrations.

The goalkeeper didn't leave his line, but he wasn't left out of the celebrations as he could be seen pumping his fist aggressively.

The Porto players did not know what to make of the situation, but they did not sink into depression because they had enough confidence in themselves.

It was still early enough in the game and they could easily pull off a comeback, they believed, so they did not look too down as they headed back for the kick-off.

#43rd minute...

The game heated up after Pacos de Ferreira took the lead in the eleventh minute.

The Porto team had turned up the heat and had gone looking for an equalizer with everything they had, but the Pacos de Ferreira team riding on the momentum of their first goal hadn't easily given in under the high pressure from the Porto team.

For a while, the passes to move the ball around had been quick and sharp, the interceptions numerous, the dribbles flamboyant, and shots had been sent flying at both ends, yet the score of the game remained the same till now despite the exciting game.

The Pacos de Ferreira had an equal share in the performance that made the match exciting and with how well they were performing under the pressure of the Porto team, the fans, players and even the head manager had begun to have alarms ringing in their heads as they watched the game remain unchanged despite their efforts.

As a testament to this, the Pacos de Ferreira team was currently on the attack and they were passing the ball around quickly in Porto's half of the field and the Porto players were unable to touch the ball.

Soon the ball was being moved around a few yards away from the left corner of Porto's penalty box.

{Pacos de Ferreira looking confident here}

{They're making pass after pass while looking for some space}

The ball was soon passed to Eustaquio, a Pacos de Ferreira who was coming from behind and he moved the ball forward towards the corner of the penalty box.

Romario Baro immediately ran into his path, but Eustaquio just changed directions so he was standing at a diagonal angle from the right post and he let fly of the ball, sending it curling towards the top right corner of Porto's goal.

{He unleashes a mid-range curler!}

{Goal!!!}

{What a surprising turn of events!}

{In a match where they were termed the underdogs in every way, Pacos de Ferreira silence everyone for the moment!}

{They are two up against an unresponsive Porto!}

{They might have come into this match without many expectations, but they have the wind in their sails now and they wouldn't want to relinquish this oh-so-sweet feeling of victory!} The commentator was outdoing himself with his commentary, after all, it wasn't every day that one saw a match where the favorites were the ones who were vastly outmatched in performance.

At this point, the Porto players could no longer be dismissive of their situation as things were already shaping up badly for them.

Being two down in the first half wasn't something any team could dismiss no matter how much they seemingly outmatched their opponents because if the difference was truly that vast, then they wouldn't be down by two in the first place.

Not to mention that the two goals were open-play goals and not from set-pieces or an own goal.

The Porto players headed back to their positions with the internal conclusion that it was time to outdo themselves.

Sergio Conceicao shouted instructions at his players, no longer able to keep his composure intact.

A loss against a much weaker team was something that no one wanted to see, especially a manager who had decided to be experimental with the squad in that game.

All the blame would fall on his head should that ever happen and Sergio Conceicao didn't need that this early in the season.

They had already had two losses in seven games and were currently on the path to a third loss in their eighth game of the season.

With their current standings in the league table, another loss was unacceptable as it would set them back even further in their campaign, hence Sergio Conceicao couldn't remain silent.

#45+3 minute...

The board had been held up and there had been four added minutes of injury time and Porto was doing their best to reduce the deficit before the half-time whistle was blown.

Doing so would give them a boost in morale for the upcoming second half, and they had gotten an opportunity to do so, but it was not in a way that was all too positive.

Chapter 304: 2020/21 Liga NOS Matchday 6 III

Porto had been on the attack and Felipe Anderson had tried to break in from the left flank. His attempt to do so had begun well as he got past his marker easily before doing a one-two pass routine with Moussa Marega to evade another Pacos de Ferreira player before running into their penalty box.

As Felipe Anderson received the ball inside the left side of the penalty box, the player that he had evaded with the one-two came rushing in from behind, not willing to let Felipe Anderson get away and cause problems for his team.

Felipe Anderson didn't see him coming as he was looking for the best option for a pass and the Pacos de Ferreira player's leg came flying in and stomped on his ankle due to a Felipe moving the ball at the last second.

Pain shot through Felipe's leg as he crumpled into the ground, immediately grabbing his ankle in pain.

{Oh! He's gone down in the penalty box!}

\*Fweeeeee\*

The referee's whistle went off behind him and the referee came running with his hand pointed to the spot, but Felipe Anderson was in no mood to feel even a little bit happy thanks to the pain in his ankle.

He couldn't even stand up and just kept rolling over in pain.

This quickly called the attention of the referee and the other players.

The referee showed a yellow card to the player who made the tackle and went over to check on Felipe Anderson.

{That looks like it hurts}

The medical team quickly ran on to the field to check on the injured player and after a quick check, it was all but confirmed that Felipe Anderson had a broken ankle, and the medical team quickly called for a stretcher to be brought over.

{The injured player must be dismayed, it's merely his first game for the team and he's already down and out with an injury} the commentator put into words what Felipe Anderson was feeling as he was carried off the field with a stretcher.

On the sidelines, Sergio Oliveira was getting ready to come on and take the place of Felipe Anderson on the left wing.

Sergio Conceicao didn't want to bring on Luis Diaz who was on the bench because he doubted his defensive skills were enough to defend the left flank by himself.

Also, Sergio Oliveira was by all rights a midfielder, despite Sergio Conceicao using him as a striker since the beginning of the season, so his presence in the midfield should give the Porto team more control of the midfield compared to their earlier weakness in the middle of the park.

After listening to the head manager's instructions, Sergio Oliveira ran onto the field to take over Felipe Anderson's position, but firstly, he would be taking the penalty as he was currently the team's first penalty taker.

If he was still on the bench, someone else would have taken it, but now that he was on the pitch, the duty of the penalty taking was handed back over to him and he took the ball to the penalty spot, placed it down and stepped back to wait for the referee's whistle.

\*Fweeeeeeee\*

On hearing the referee's whistle, Oliveira ran at the ball and blasted into the top left corner of the goal while the keeper remained rooted to the spot.

{Great penalty! Blasted into the top corner and the goalkeeper was stunned into immobility}

{They have one back. It's come at the cost of a player, but Porto will take it}

{This will give them the morale they need in the second half to go and win this... assuming they have it in them to out play the Pacos de Ferreira team we have seen out there today} the commentator spoke with a bit less excitement than he normally would whenever the ball went into the back of the net on either side.

The Porto players also did not show to much excitement either as they headed back to their half of the field.

No sooner had the Pacos de Ferreira team kicked off that the referee blew his whistle to bring the first half of the game to an end.

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#59th minute...

The halftime break had come and gone and the players were back on the field for the second half, with each team outdoing themselves to try and make the game end in their favor.

The Porto team was doing their best to get an equalizer, especially now that they were only a goal away from doing so.

The Pacos de Ferreira team couldn't relax their efforts either as they were in a ver precarious situation. They knew that allowing the Porto team to get an equalizer early into the second half was almost a one way path to their defeat, so they were doing their best to make sure that situation did not become a reality.

They had dug deep into themselves to pull out a performance worthy of keeping a team like Porto at bay despite the opponents going all out against them.

Not only were they keeping the Porto team at bay, they also managed to send out the occasional attack, trying to catch the Porto team on the counter, and they were at it at that exact moment.

The ball was flying down the left wing and the Pacos de Ferreira left winger tried to cross the ball into the penalty box, but Chancel Mbemba jumped in his way and blocked the cross.

\*Fweeeeeee\*

{The whistle has gone off and the referee's running over, what could be the issue!?}

The referee ran at the Porto 18-yard box, pointing at the penalty spot.

The replay began to show on the viewers screens as the Porto players tried to argue with the referee to make him call off his decision.

The replay showed the ball bouncing off Chancel Mbemba's hand when he blocked the cross. The ball had flown at him too fast for him to get his hand out of the way in time, hence the ball had crashed into his hand, causing the referee to call for a handball and a penalty since he was inside his team's penalty box when it happened.

Chapter 305: 2020/21 Liga NOS Matchday 6 IV

The Porto players weren't able to get the referee to change his decision despite their arguments and in the end, the penalty was given to the Pacos de Ferreira who were overly joyous at their dastardly good luck today.

Everything was falling in place for them and they were on the route to winning one of the biggest games for them in the campaign... if only they could score this penalty and hold out till the end of the game.

Costa, the Pacos de Ferreira player who would be taking the penalty put the ball down on the spot and stepped back.

{Porto cannot believe their terrible luck}

{They've already been two behind and barely managed to reduce the deficit, and now they are faced with another deficit-increasing challenge}

{The Pacos de Ferreira man will be looking to help his team increase their lead which could go a long way in helping them win this game, but Porto will be hoping their goalkeeper can stop this penalty}

\*Fweeeeeee\*

Costa ran up to the ball with undisguised ease despite the pressure on his neck and chipped the ball down the middle, but Augustin Marchesin had already dived down the left.

{Great penalty!}

{Chipped down the middle. Borderline disrespectful penalty!}

{As if taking a two-goal lead isn't enough for this man, he humiliates the goalkeeper while doing it in style!}

{Pacos de Ferreira are up to three and Porto once again have an uphill battle facing them if they wish to somehow avoid losing this game}

{There's still time for a turn of events, but the Pacos de Ferreira team will not be easily giving up their lead, but can they hold onto it against a team of desperate dragons?}

The Pacos de Ferreira team didn't bother with the commentary that seemed to doubt them, they just rejoiced at their goal. It was them living in the moment, and they were going to do their best to make sure they could continue celebrating once the match was over.

#78th minute...

It had been almost twenty minutes since Pacos de Ferreira once again took a two-goal lead over Porto and Porto had been doing their best to try and reduce the deficit, but so far they had no success and time was quickly running out.

However, Porto wasn't a team that was quick to give up and had kept trying to score.

In the Pacos de Ferreira half of the field, Otavio who had been brought on for Marko Grujic passed the ball to Mylo who sent the ball down to the right where Jesus Corona waited.

Jesus Corona received the ball and flicked it past his marker, getting past him and making his way down the right flank.

He quickly cut into the penalty box and sent a pass into the penalty box at Mylo.

Mylo received the ball while using his back to shield off his marker, but he was in an awkward position and couldn't take a shot, so he glanced meaningfully at Otavio who was rushing towards the penalty box and flicked the ball with his heel into Otavio's path.

The ball rolled through the legs of the player hassling him from behind and rolled into the path of Otavio at the edge of the penalty box and Otavio didn't hesitate in sending a powerful shot at the goal.

The ball didn't rise off the ground but flew powerfully at the bottom right corner and smashed into the back of the net despite the goalkeeper lunging for it.

{Goal!}

{It didn't take him long, a few minutes ago he was on the bench, but already he has scored!}

{They are back within one!}

{Some may say it's late, but for Porto, there's no time like the present!}

{They have them in their sights again! What do we go from here!?!} the commentator bellowed as he watched the ball smash into the back of the net.

Porto's goal came as a shocker to the Pacos de Ferreira team and it let them know that they couldn't afford to relax if they planned to end this game with a win.

Especially now that the Porto team had just gotten a second goal.

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\*Fweeeeeeeee\*

{There goes the final whistle!}

{Porto have lost!}

{In a surprising turn of events, Porto have fallen short against a much weaker opponent. They were vastly outmatched in performance in the first half of the game and their second-half performance just wasn't enough}

{They tried, tried, tried, but the goal just wouldn't come and they have lost}

{This is their second loss of the season and this will see them fall to the eighth position on the table, something no one expected to see from this team}

{They will have to pick themselves up from this loss in coming games otherwise, their chances at any silverware this season may very well slip through their fingers} The commentator gave his finishing commentary as the players headed off the field.

The Porto players headed to their locker room while Sergio Conceicao headed to the post-match interview as he wanted to quickly take on the remaining headaches of the night before heading back to Porto.

He needed some comforting and pampering from his wife tonight before answering to the club management tomorrow.

At the interview, the questions started flying in, and just like he expected quite a few annoying questions that seemed to paint him as the fault were among the questions.

"You," he gestured with his eyes to the reporter right in front of him.

"It's Porto's second loss in the Liga NOS campaign this season. What would you say happened out there? Could the changes you made to the team be responsible for such a poor showing," the reporter did not hesitate to fire a flurry of questions at the Porto manager.

"Losses happen all the time in football and they happen for many reasons. What happened out there is not something I can claim to be able to explain, because while it is true that there was a major change to our usual line-up and shape, I can confidently say that apart from a few mistakes, my players did well,"

“Our opponents just did better than us and that ended with our loss,” Sergio Conceicao gave an extensive answer that absolved everyone of fault.

Chapter 306: Chronicles of a Fan: Tony’s Bad Day I

As simple as his answer was, it was the best answer he could give to the hyena-like reporters.

Sergio Conceicao could have easily thrown some of the players under the bus, especially the loaned players that he had used in the match, but he didn’t think it was fair to throw them under the bus while absolving himself of fault, after all, he was the manager.

He was the one who had picked their formation and added them to the line-up in the first place, but he wasn’t going to take on the blame either.

He didn’t need the drama.

If he would absolve himself of fault, he would absolve everyone else of fault... that was only fair.

Anyway, it was football, anything could happen.

“Next question,”

“Porto fell short of victory today because they couldn’t score an equalizer despite having ample time to get the equalizer. Would you say the team missed the presence of some of the game-changing performances of other members of the team you chose to rest today, for example, Viera or Jason?” the next reporter asked the Porto head manager.

“Well, it was a tough game and the players couldn’t just find that goal that would give us the equalizer no matter how much they tried. I wouldn’t say that a different set of players could have done better as I don’t know that,” Sergio Conceicao responded to the reporter.

“Next question...”

After answering a few more questions, Sergio Conceicao ended the interview and headed to the allocated locker room for the Porto team.

He soon arrived at the locker room where the players were changing out of their jerseys and getting ready to leave.

“Listen up guys, we lost today, and part of the blame falls on me for choosing to try a new formation this early without you guys fully acclimating to it, but it does not change the fact that you guys performed woefully out there,”

“Our defense was porous, our midfield was lacking, and our attackers were hitting everything but the target,”

“Today’s performance is not something I want to see again, or woe shall befall whoever performs like this again,” Sergio Conceicao did not mince words with the players as he was not pleased by their performance.

After all, they were professionals earning big bucks, so if they couldn’t adjust to a new formation and put on a good performance when required, then what was the point of all their efforts on the training ground?

What were they being paid for?

Sergio Conceicao was not some pushover coach managing some low-level team and he did not take kindly to loss, so it was already good enough that this was all he had to say to his players after such a terrible showing from them.

He had more to say, but he decided to hold in his comments for now and instead mention it at the next team meeting at training.

With the head manager having said his piece, he left the locker room and the players hurried up the packing as they had to leave soon since they were heading back to Porto that same night.

\*\*\*

Jason stood up from the couch, turning off the TV with the remote since the match was over. He was a bit surprised and disheartened that the team had lost the game.

He wasn't a fool and he knew that the team's loss was his loss whether he played or not.

Trophies were won as a team and not as an individual.

Even the individual trophies could not be won without the help of one's teammates, so there was no way he could be happy that his team lost a game.

It held no benefits for him in any way, after all, he was now more or less one of the major names in the lineup up so he didn't have too much in his way concerning the line-ups.

His efforts and performance had long spoken for him.

"I guess it's back to work for me then," he muttered as he stood up from his seat and began packing up the plates he had eaten from.

\*\*\*

At a convenience store on one of the more obscure streets in Porto, a group of young men who looked to be in their mid-twenties walked through the front door discussing as they went.

"Today has to be out to get me man," one of the men said, looking downcast.

His name was Tony, and he was not enjoying the day at all.

His day had started on a bad note when he had woken up especially late but had still managed to get to work just barely on time after driving at speeds that would make an average street racer jealous.

Unfortunately, that was just the beginning of his misery as barely one hour into his arrival at work, he was already being chewed out by his boss. It was not the first time and he could usually bear with it, but for some reason, he snapped and shouted back at his boss.

Despite not meaning to, it had felt good to get back at his annoying boss, but the consequences of doing so left him without a job before half the day had passed.

'I'll just find another job, it's not the end of the world,' he had thought to himself as he packed up his stuff and left in his car.

He had decided to go to his girlfriend's place to get some comforting and maybe some cuddles, thinking to himself, that whatever happened would happen, but when he got to his girlfriend's place, he met her with another guy in a very compromising position.

He didn't need to be a genius to realize that he was being cheated on and he confronted the traitorous bit\*h and her living flesh sex toy, but all he got was her gas lighting him with all sorts of meaningless statements.

She didn't even try to deny it and placed the blame on him for being too busy with his job.

Chapter 307: Chronicles of a Fan: Tony's Bad Day II

Tony had not even had the energy to argue much after that and had simply left the place.

It was not his first rodeo and he had suffered heartbreak before so he knew that all he had to do was call his boys over, and drink away his worries while talking about and doing meaningless sh\*t.

When he woke up the next morning, he would shelf this heartbreak into the deepest recesses of his mind and be on his way.

That was exactly what he had done... or planned on doing anyway.

His boys had come over and comforted him in a manly way, which was literally just them making fun of his situation till he had no choice but to join them in laughing at himself.

By the time they were ready to move on to their next agenda which was to drink themselves unconscious, one of them remembered that Porto had a game that evening.

Surprisingly, the whole group of friends were Porto fans so they had immediately decided to go lighter on the drinking for a while and instead watch the match.

They could drink themselves unconscious after their team achieved victory, right?

That was how much confidence they had in their team.

Tony had taken his confidence a step further and gone ahead to open his 1xbet account on his phone and place a bet on Porto's victory, hoping to use his winnings from the game to fatten up his savings for a bit so he wouldn't have to worry much until he got another job.

"I should have known when I saw that formation and that line-up man, I should have known," Tony almost cried to himself as he said aggrievedly.

"I know man, I got love for old man Conceicao, but what in heaven's mercy was he smoking when he set that line-up," one of Tony's friends was as aggrieved as he was.

"A totally new formation, debuts from three new loan players, and he didn't even play our better players! Did he think this was some training match!" Tony shouted in aggravation as he ranted.

"He didn't start Oliveira, he didn't play Diaz, he didn't play Viera, he didn't even play Jason!"

"All he played were those academy kids who were just fumbling over each other and couldn't keep possession for one minute straight,"

“Of those three loaned players, only that Malang Sarr played a bit well, and even that was horrendous because we still conceded three goals, that Marko Gubic guy in midfield fully displayed why they don’t want him at his own club, and that Felipe Anderson!”

“Who let pencil leg come to Porto!?” Tony continued ranting once he unleashed himself in fury upon the Porto players and all his bitterness started flowing out of his mouth.

His words were extremely harsh and the Porto players were already catching stray bullets involuntarily.

“Righttttt! They hardly touched that ni\*\*a and he got a broken leg,” a dark-skinned guy who was also in the store and trying to buy something could not help jumping in on the conversation.

“With spaghetti legs like that, it’s no wonder he couldn’t cover his wing and they kept playing past him like he wasn’t there until we were already behind by two,” Tony added in annoyance.

“Hey, at least he got a penalty for us,” One of Tony’s friends interrupted, trying to defend Felipe Anderson.

“And we still didn’t win!” Tony cut short his friend’s defense.

“When did we become so weak as a team to be losing to teams like Maritimo and Pacos de Ferreira, broooo,”

“We are currently six games into the season and we are not even in the top five! We were the champions of the previous season for fu\*k’s sake,” Tony didn’t want to stop his rant.

“A lot of our players ended up leaving though,” another guy among the group of friends interjected, trying to make Tony see reason, but Tony had chosen to be blind for a while.

“And whose fault is that, huh?”

"If you are going to sell important players, then all you have to do is make enough profit so you can replace them with people that are up to par, not spaghetti legs Anderson, or that pussio from Liverpool," Tony especially drawled out the last part of his sentence, adding a bit of an English accent flair to make it sound more insulting.

"In fact, why is every single loaned player from the premier league, there are other good players elsewhere," he continued, wanting to pour out all the grievances he had faced today on the team.

"You aren't talking about our own players though, or the players we just bought," the first friend who had interrupted Tony earlier cut in with a wry smile.

"I've got nothing to say about those new transfers. We're stuck with them so we might as well just wait for them to perform, but we can't be paying those guys exorbitant salaries for their home team and still not have them play what they are worth" Tony said, hitting the nail on the head.

It was well known that the salary of Premier League players was a lot more than that of even the top players in the Liga NOS.

Pepe was Porto's highest player yet he was only receiving 50k Euros in wages per week, which was less than the average amount a player of Leeds United would receive in the Premier League that season.

West Ham's current average salary was about 115k Euros so even if Porto was just paying 50%, it was still more money than they were giving their highest-paid player, yet the player receiving said wage wasn't giving out a top performance.

"Like what the fu\*k man, if he just did half of what my boy Jason was doing, then I wouldn't have an issue with the guy," Tony said in an aggrieved tone.

"At least he tried man, just let it go," Another of Tony's friends sighed, tired of Tony's incessant ranting.

"Let it go? Are you trying to compare Felipe with Jason? Like Dragon Rose Jason?"

"Are you kidding bro?" Tony asked like he couldn't believe his ears.

“Jason’s worst performance is better than whatever shit that Felipe guy played out there today. He should have played man,” Tony drawled, not letting off.

“And then he should have gotten another injury? Can’t you see that the manager was resting players for the Champions League game? Jason would probably leave at the end of this season anyway, he’s already receiving interest from other teams with his performances,” one guy had finally had enough and decided to shut Tony up for good by hitting where it hurt and he hit the target as Tony went quiet.

“...”

“... It’s not like we’re going to win the Champions League anyway,” Tony spoke again after a period of silence, wanting to get back at his friend who had silenced him.

“Oh for Fu\*ks sake!” The whole group of friends exclaimed at the same time as they turned on Tony.

“Shut up, will you?” one of them said after.

“Just let it go man, we can’t change anything now,” another one said.

“This is probably why your girl went looking for another dick, cuz your stupid a\*\* talked way too much,” the third guy didn’t have a filter on his mouth and just let his annoyance take over leaving the whole group of friends staring at him with their mouths hanging open.

Everyone went silent as they stared at Tony to see his reaction.

“...Fuck her and fuck her new boy toy, let’s just get some drinks and get drunk, I don’t have to go to work tomorrow anyway,” Tony rolled his eyes as his friend’s words sucker-punched him back into consciousness.

“You don’t have to go to work?” One of his friends asked.

“Didn’t I tell you guy? That I was fired today?” Tony asked in surprise.

“No wonder you’re so angry, anyway, let’s get some drinks, you can’t worry if you’re drunk,” one of them said as they started packing drinks from the shelves.

\*\*\*

\*\*31st October 2020\*\*

\*10:23 am\*

Abuja, Nigeria...

In the head office of the Nigerian Football Federation, Gernot Rohr, Nigeria’s national team’s head manager was seated in his office, perusing through some papers on his table.

There were quite a few stacks of files on his table and Gernot had to go through them as they held information about players with Nigerian origins.

Currently, Gernot Rohr was trying to pick the players that he would call up to the national team for the upcoming international break where they had a qualification match to play against Sierra Leone for a place in the upcoming Africa Cup of Nations Tournament(AFCON).

Gernot Rohr was taking his time to pick out the players as he knew that lately, the reception he had been receiving from the NFF’s management had been quite cold due to his inconsistent results.

Moreover, it had been four years since he became the manager of the Super Eagles, making him the longest serving coach of the Nigerian National team since it’s inception, yet he didn’t have a single trophy to show for it despite the fact that he was coaching Africa’s strongest team... or at least they looked that way on paper.

It was time to take some risks if he wanted to keep his job, he thought to himself as he kept his eyes on one particular file that he had taken extra time to read through earlier.

“Seems I have to call in quite a few favors for this one... I hope he accepts,” Gernot muttered as he picked up his phone, his eyes still on the file.

On the file was the name “Jason Bolu” written in bold letters.

Chapter 308: Champions League 2020/21; Group Stage Matchday 3

**\*\*3rd November 2020\*\***

**\*7:55 pm\***

{The stadium is quiet but all this sounds like the prelude to the excitement that would follow as Porto hosts Olympique Marseille here at Estadio do Dragao for their third group stage match}

{It's Porto vs Marseille}

{It's a game that promises excitement with two sides that look to be equal on paper}

{Let's get straight into the line-ups for the two teams}

{Porto will be arranging themselves across the field in the 4-4-2 formation and will be looking to control possession for the majority of the game while hitting their opponents with swift counterattacks, especially from the flanks}

{In Porto's goal, we have Augustin Marchesin and the two wing-backs are Zaidu Sanusi and Wilson Manafa on the right and left sides respectively}

{In the center of the defense are Porto and Ivan Marcano}

{In the center of the midfield we have Otavio and Mattheus Uribe taking charge of the center while Jason and Fabio Viera would be on the right and left sides of the midfield and up front we have a strike partnership between Moussa Marega and Sergio Oliveira}

{This is a more familiar-looking line-up than what we saw from them in their season campaign match just four days ago where they lost}

{They will be looking to get back to winning ways today, but it'll be easier said than done for them against opponents like Marseille}

The commentator went on to finish all his pre-match commentary while the players waited for the pre-match formalities to be done before they began arranging themselves on the field.

\*\*\*

\*Fweeeeeee\*

The pre-match formalities were over and the match kicked off as soon as the clock hit eight, bringing a start to Porto and Marseille's third group-stage match of the Champions League that season.

Both teams had plans to win as they both had the same number of points.

Porto was currently leading due to goal difference, but goal difference wouldn't matter if Marseille managed to win the match and take all the points home.

They would take the second position of the group irrespective of their goal difference and that was exactly what they planned to do, however, Porto wasn't going to just allow them to do that, especially since they were coming in furious with their loss in their last game.

It didn't take long for the match to heat up.

# 4th minute...

The match had barely started, but both teams were already tearing at each other and already a couple of shots had been sent flying, but none had gone in and the two teams were still moving with high intensity with their energy tanks still at full.

Porto was currently in possession and the ball was moving around quickly among their players as they slowly pushed up the field while making sure not to lose possession.

From Otavio to Uribe to Viera, and then to Oliveira before going back to Viera.

The ball moved quickly and then Otavio who received the ball finally sent the ball to the right where Jason received it but didn't pass immediately.

The moment Jason stopped the ball, his teammates already knew that he was about to make a run and they started looking around for open spaces to run through while those who were being marked started freeing themselves.

Just as they had thought, Jason was indeed looking to make a run and he waited for his marker to approach while seemingly leaving himself open as he faced his approaching marker.

The Marseille defender slowed as he approached, crouching slightly and getting into a defensive posture, but despite all his preparation, Jason remained open as he squared off against him, seemingly looking for a way past him.

The defender continued to draw closer yet it seemed like Jason hadn't been able to find space, but just when the defender was about to lunge forward, Jason flicked the ball forward at high speed and burst past the Marseille defender, stunning him and leaving him unable to react in time.

Jason made full use of his high acceleration and zoomed past the defender before heading down the right flank and sending in a curling cross into the penalty box where his teammates were waiting.

{A cross!? Header from Marega!}

{GOAL!!!} the commentator shouted in excitement as he saw Marega outmuscle his marker and rise to the air to get on the end of Jason's cross and direct it into the back of the net.

{Porto open up the game early!}

{I'm sure the manager must have mentioned this in the locker room. Scoring early gives you the chance to dictate the game from early on and Porto have taken that chance}

The commentator continued commenting while the Porto players kept celebrating, the absence of fans at the stadium not dampening their excitement.

They were sure the fans were celebrating with them in their respective homes anyway, and their thoughts weren't wrong.

# 10th minute...

With Porto taking the lead early in the game, they began trying to dictate the game and playing at their tempo, but the Marseille team wasn't planning on giving up control of the game that easily and had been doing their best to resist Porto's rising momentum.

Porto had the ball and had been passing it around in the middle of the field, but Mattheus Uribe had tried to dribble past a Marseille player when he had the ball instead of squaring it off and he ended up losing the ball after a rough tackle from the Marseille player who immediately took control of the ball and sent a splitting through pass behind Porto's defense.

Pepe and Ivan Marcano were the only players in the back so they weren't ready when Payet burst past them to get on the end of the pass before taking the ball forward and curling it past Augustin Marchesin.

{Goal!}

{It hasn't taken them long, they have their equalizer}

{Porto wasn't ready for th-}

\*Fweeeeeeee\*

The commentator's excited commentary was speedily interrupted by a shrill blast of the referee's whistle.

{The flag's not up for offside, it seems there's been a foul before the goal} the commentator explained as he saw the referee pointing to Mattheus Uribe who was still lying down on the ground.

The Marseille players immediately gathered around the referee, trying to downplay the tackle, but Uribe was still down and it seemed like he wouldn't be getting up soon.

The medics soon ran onto the field to check on Uribe who seemed to be injured, while the referee ran off the field to check with VAR.

Less than a minute later, the referee headed back onto the field, giving his final verdict.

The goal was to be disallowed as Uribe had been fouled as the ball was snatched from him.

Another few seconds later, the medical team had a stretcher brought over as Uribe seemed to have sustained a knee injury and he couldn't continue the game.

On the sidelines, Sergio Oliveira got a call-up from the manager and he quickly began warming up, preparing to come on for the injured player.

# 31st minute...

\*Fweeeeeeee\*

{Oh, the referee's blown his whistle and is pointing at the spot! Penalty to Porto!}

{Jason had been cutting in from his wing and trying to weasel his way around his marker, but the defender wasn't having it and brought him down in the penalty box} The commentator described the situation with extensive commentary while the referee ran over to the location of the foul and pulled out a yellow card.

{Oh, as if a penalty wasn't enough, the player has received a booking as well and will have to start watching himself from now on}

Jason adjusted his socks and stood up with the help of Viera pulling him up.

The Porto players gathered around and soon the penalty taker was decided to be the current vice-captain of the team, Sergio Oliveira.

Jason would have rather taken the penalty shot by himself, but he had to acquiesce to the hierarchy and give up the penalty kick.

Sergio Oliveira took the ball to the penalty spot and set it down before taking a few steps back to wait for the referee's whistle while the players of the two teams arranged themselves outside the penalty box with the referee monitoring their movements.

Once everything was in place, the referee put his whistle to his mouth and blew hard.

\*Fweeeeeee\*

On hearing the referee's whistle, Oliveira ran at the ball and hit it deftly to the bottom right side of the post while the unlucky Marseille goalkeeper had preemptively dived towards the left.

{Well taken penalty!}

{That makes it two!}

{Porto are pulling clear here!}

{The goalkeeper followed his instincts, but with instincts like that, I hope he doesn't gamble} The commentator sneaked in an unruly choice of words, but only the Marseille players and fans cared after hearing the referee's sneaky diss.

The Porto fans on the other hand were laughing while celebrating their team's second goal of the game.

Their team looked strong on the ball and if they continued with this level of performance, then the game was surely in the bag, unlike their previous game.

For this, the Porto fans couldn't be any happier.

Chapter 309: Champions League 2020/21; Group Stage Matchday 3 II

# 69th minute...

The first half of the game had come and gone, ending with Porto having a two-goal lead while Marseille remained unable to trouble the scoreboard operator.

After fifteen minutes of halftime, the players were back on the field and doing their utmost to get the game going their way.

Porto was trying to further their lead while Marseille was trying to find a way back into the game.

Neither had much success so far, but that was about to change with Porto on the attack once again.

Porto had been keeping possession of the ball high up the pitch and had the ball constantly moving just outside Marseille's penalty area as they looked for an opening in the opposition's defense.

However, the space wasn't showing up and Jason who had just received the ball decided to try and create the space himself.

He cut in from the right and did a one-two with Oliveira to get past a Marseille player and he received the ball back inside Marseille's penalty box.

Jason continued pushing forward, slowing his pace and doing a couple of step-overs to try and confuse the player who stood in between him and the goal, but just before the player could make his move, Jason suddenly sent a pass to his right where Oliveira had run over.

{Oliveira!!!} The commentator shouted as Oliveira unleashed a powerful full shot at Marseille's goalpost.

{Fantastic save! The keeper's equal to it!}

{The ball bounces back into play...! Diaz is there!}

{Goal!} The commentator's voice rose into an excited frenzy as he watched Luis Diaz slam the ball back in after Marseille's goalkeeper had blocked the earlier shot.

{It fell his way and he didn't hesitate!}

{Surely there's no way back for Marseille now!} The commentator's words didn't matter much to the Porto team that was celebrating their goal, but the Marseille players at the stadium and their fans currently had something in common, which was the disappointed looks on their faces as they began to inwardly accept that the game was beyond them.

# 74th minute...

{Porto's victory in this match feels like it has been set in stone, and they're playing like it, but Marseille's players seem to be getting rougher every minute with them having amassed four yellow cards already in this game}

{That was a rough tackle on Jason just seconds ago, but luckily, Jason seems unhurt, it must have stung}

{He's gearing up to take the free-kick and on the sidelines, a new player seems to be gearing up to take his place on the pitch}

{It seems the manager will be taking him off soon so this free-kick may be his last chance to get on the scoreboard}

{It is within shooting distance and we've seen him score a couple of free kicks before} The commentator gave extensive commentary of the happenings on the pitch.

Jason stood a few meters behind the ball as he waited for the referee's whistle, the goal being the only thing in his sights.

He had seen Francisco Conceicao warming up and he knew that his time on the pitch was almost up, but he still wanted to get on the scoreboard, hence he was planning to go directly for goal with this free-kick.

It was a bit farther out than he was used to at almost thirty yards away, but it wasn't too far away that he couldn't take it directly.

\*Fweeeeee\*

Jason's thinking was cut short by the referee's whistle and his body immediately began moving as he took step after step towards the ball, his pace increasing with every step until he was right behind the ball and hit it powerfully.

{He takes a crack at it!} the commentator shouted as the ball flew towards the post, somehow evading the wall and homing in on the goal with a slight curve.

Marseille's goalkeeper saw the ball coming at his goal and he immediately ran towards the path of the ball and launched himself at it, but right from the moment he jumped for the ball, he knew he fell short and couldn't reach the ball.

He could only track the ball with his eyes until...

\*CLANG\*

{Oh! It's hit the cross bar!}

{It's not out of play yet, and the players are scrambling for the ball!}

{Mylo get's there first and hits it!?!} the commentator's voice held anticipation, and his tone was soon justified as he saw the ball smash into the back of the net from Mylo's rebounding shot.

{GOAL!}

{It's four for Porto} the commentator shouted as Mylo ran down the sidelines and jumped into a knee slide.

It was a bit of an over the top celebration considering the match and the lack of fans present in the stadium, but his teammates and the fans watching didn't mind.

Jason also went over to join in the celebrations, but internally he was gutted to have missed the free kick.

'Seems my aim still needs a lot more work,' he thought as he gave Mylo a high five and turned away, heading down the sidelines while his teammates headed back to their half of the field.

Jason's jersey number was already being shown on the board in red and he was taken off for Francisco Conceicao who was having his debut game for the club.

The head manager was making use of their lead to give the young player a few minutes on the pitch... of course, Francisco being the head manager's son helped that decision, but no one cared too much about it.

At least no one on the first team really put it to mind... Jason didn't know about the other youth players.

Jason received a pat on the back from the manager as he headed to his seat on the bench, his face impassive as he didn't have much of a reason to smile.

From a general point of view, Jason had performed well and done everything that could be done in that game for a player in his position, but Jason begged to differ.

The only major stat that he had gotten was an assist.

For a match where his team was able to get four goals from four different people, Jason wasn't able to get a single goal, and he wasn't happy with it.

He needed more, he needed to do more before he could attain legendary status and performances like this were good, but nowhere near enough.

Chapter 310: A Strange but Interesting Invitation

The match was over and it had ended with the scores of Porto 4 : 0 Marseille.

Neither of the two teams had managed to worry the scoreboard operator any further after Jason had headed off the pitch despite shots being sent flying at both ends of the field and in the end the final whistle was blown.

Sergio Oliveira was named the man of the match and he was the one who ended up having to face most of the interviews.

Jason had used that opportunity to sneak into the tunnel and avoid the reporters.

He wasn't completely successful, but he avoided most of the media attention and finally reached the team's resting room where he began preparing to leave.

He first took a quick shower to wash away all the sweat and some of the exhaustion from the match.

Once he was done with his shower, he headed back to the locker room where some other members of his team were also clearing up and getting ready to leave.

As Jason dressed up in the New Balance sports outfit that he had worn into the stadium when they had arrived for the match, Zaidu Sanusi sat beside him and said,

“Great work out there today, mam. Too bad you didn’t get one past the goalkeeper,” Zaidu commented and comforted Jason with his words at the same time.

“Thanks man, you did good too,” Jason nodded slightly as he responded, most of his focus on the clothes he was wearing, simply taking the conversation in stride as he wasn’t especially close to Zaidu Sanusi.

They were teammates and they related well with each other, but that was about it.

He definitely couldn’t claim to have a close friendship with Zaidu Sanusi, so he wasn’t really putting much thought into the conversation, but Zaidu kept talking and, not willing to end the conversation.

Jason mostly responded with a few words of his own as he did his own thing, but slowly his curiosity began to light up as Zaidu’s sudden conversation was a bit strange, however, before he could cut in and ask what had brought on this sudden situation, Zaidu asked him a question.

“Hey, do you have anything major you’re doing tomorrow, you know, like a date or something, or maybe you’ve got some prior engagements, seeing as tomorrow is a free day and all?” Zaidu Sanusi asked Jason.

“...” Jason paused for a second and glanced over at Zaidu Sanusi for the first time since the conversation began.

“Well, as you said, tomorrow is a free day, so I don’t really have anything to do, apart from playing games all day... I don’t exactly have a girlfriend... yet,”

“... So, I usually like to use my resting day for what it should be used for, you know, resting,”

“Why do you ask?” Jason asked after explaining his likely plans.

“Well, do you have some time tomorrow that you can spare for a meeting with me, I... We want to talk with you about something,” Zaidu Sanusi replied, not bothering to read into Jason’s response.

“We? Who are the ‘we’?” Jason asked with a raised eyebrow.

“Me and someone else,” Zaidu Sanusi answered.

“And who is this someone else?” Jason asked again, not satisfied with the veiled answer.

“Can’t say. It’s a surprise, but don’t worry, you’re safe. I’m not planning to kidnap you or anything,” Zaidu Sanusi added a little joke to his answer as he knew how dumb it sounded to invite someone to a meeting with unknown people while not giving them a full explanation.

“That doesn’t exactly help me consider your offer,” Jason chuckled as he continued looking at Zaidu who was trying really hard to get him to agree.

‘Someone must have put him up to something, the question is who?’ Jason thought to himself before finally giving Zaidu a slightly affirmative answer.

“Alright, I’ll bite. Give me a location and time and I’ll drop by...” he began before pausing for a bit,

“Ah, wait, before that, I hope you’re not planning on wasting my time on something dumb,” Jason asked with a straight face.

No matter how curious he was, Jason wasn’t about to let someone waste his time for absolutely no reason.

This was two hours of his time, they were talking about.

It was time he wouldn't be getting back and would rather he spent it lazing around on his own terms than wasting it away on another person's terms.

"I assure you, it's not a waste of your time, and it is actually quite important," Zaidu Sanusi assured Jason, causing Jason's curiosity to rise even further.

"Previously, you had my curiosity, but now you have my attention... however, I'll wait till tomorrow to find out I guess," Jason laughed.

"Alright then," Zaidu said as he dapped Jason to seal the deal.

'I wonder what he wants to talk about, or who wants to meet me?' Jason wondered internally as he watched Zaidu walk off and start packing up his own stuff.

"I guess I'll find out," Jason muttered to himself as he turned his face away and refocused on packing all his football equipment into his sports bag.

Just as he was zipping up his bag after putting the last of his things inside the sports bag, Sergio Conceicao walked into the locker room.

"Good work out there boys. Good to see you guys working hard to put an end to the bad form that was once again threatening to raise its head,"

"The attackers did their job up front, keeping their markers in check and making the defenders constantly under tenterhooks,"

"The midfielders did well in helping us control the game while keeping possession of the ball most of the time, and finally, our defenders were rock solid and didn't give way to our opponents,"

"Overall, it was a very good team effort and I hope to see more of the same in coming matches,"

“I’m sure you guys agree and want to keep winning like this, right?” Sergio Conceicao asked the players after commending each section of the team and the team’s general efforts on the pitch.

“Yes coach!” the Porto players responded loudly, their excitement still high after the high-intensity match.